

*St Mary's*



# AVE

*ADVENT 2021*



---

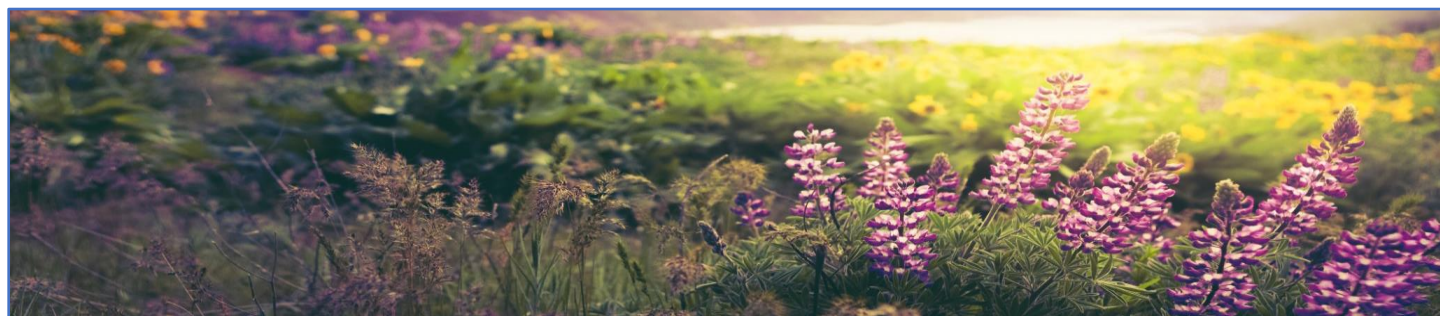
## TABLE OF CONTENTS

From Father Jan .....	4
Why Mary is Important to me .....	6
A Journey To, and With, St Mary's North Melbourne .....	17
The Cup .....	19
Cyrene .....	23
Reading at the Melbourne Cemetery .....	27
The Cedars of Lebanon .....	31
To Newcastle and Back .....	33
Clarice Beckett – the forgotten artist .....	35
Living with Dementia .....	40
Something to Sing About!.....	43
The King of Instruments and I.....	46
A Child's Christmas Out of the Ordinary.....	49

### ACKNOWLEDGEMENT OF COUNTRY

We meet on the traditional lands of the Wurundjeri people of the great Kulin nation.  
We acknowledge their leaders past present and emerging and offer them our respects.

*Disclaimer: The opinions expressed in this publication are those of the authors. They do not purport to reflect the opinions or views of the parish of St Marys, the Anglican Church, or its members.*



---

Unlike the last bumper edition of Ave, devoted to the Season of Creation, this Advent/Christmas edition is a more usual collection of parish articles, representing the concerns of individual writers. Here you will find articles worthy of academic journals and recollections and stories with the gentle wit of the best literary magazines and, of course, there are so many interesting articles expressing the interests of parishioners. We are blessed at St Mary's that there are always people willing to contribute.

Thanks to you all.

And please remember the short mystery or detective story competition whose entries are to be submitted by February 15, 2022. The prize will be a recent crime novel so start writing now.

∞∞∞∞

---

## From Father Jan

Dear Friends,

*Stir up, we beseech thee, O Lord, the wills of thy faithful people; that they, plenteously bringing forth the fruit of good works, may of thee be plenteously rewarded; through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.*

I always love this old Collect from the Sunday before Advent in the Book of Common Prayer which has been retained in the current Prayer Book for Australia as the post-communion prayer of the Feast of Christ the King. This old collect serves as a reminder to us of the coming Advent and Christmas season as well as reminding us that it is time to make the Christmas pudding for Christmas day. Romantic Victorians would picture this as the whole family gathering around the mixing bowl and all taking it in turns to stir the Christmas pudding.

What always strikes me at the season is just how much we take for granted in this season which seems to be more about shopping and gift giving than anything else. I grew up in a migrant family trying to build a new life in a new country and while Christmases were very special, we would only receive one present each year and that was the one day of the year we would get to eat chicken.

Now, of course children often expect many presents and chicken is an everyday food. In previous generations Christmas puddings were very special and would be saved up for during the year. Butter, eggs, spices and dried fruit were not everyday commodities, and so a pudding made with these ingredients was savoured.

Despite the difficulties of the past year, God has again been good to us, and it is important to celebrate with our families and friends, but it is important also to thank God for God's goodness.

Just as I finished this letter a post appeared on my Facebook which really sums all of this up. The picture is a colourised version of the photo from the 1940s of a

---

---

young Austrian boy getting a new pair of shoes.

I wish you all a very happy and holy Advent, Christmas and Epiphany.

Jan



∞∞∞∞



---

## Why Mary is Important to me

*Dorothy A. Lee*

Mary, the mother of Jesus, has come over the years to play an increasing role in my life, both theologically and spiritually. I was brought up to see her as ‘just an ordinary woman’ and no more: not someone we should consider in any particular way. The silence about Mary went alongside the austere Calvinism of my upbringing which allowed for no sign of the feminine, in person or ritual.

Study of the Gospels made a great change to my apprehension of Mary. In Luke’s Gospel, she is the first Christian: she believes the words of Gabriel at the annunciation and is blessed by Elizabeth for her extraordinary faith (Lk 1:26-45). She is present at Pentecost along with the twelve apostles (Acts 1:14), receiving the gift of the Spirit, a tongue of fire above her head and the words of other languages in her mouth (Acts 2:1-4).

In John’s Gospel she plays a vital role at the wedding at Cana: initiating Jesus’ ministry and nurturing the faith of the first small group of disciples by advocating trust in the word of Jesus (Jn 2:3-5). At the foot of the cross she is given to the Beloved Disciple, as she is given to every disciple, as the mother to be received into ‘his own’ home and heart (Jn 19:26-27).

I came to see that in both Gospels Mary represents the communion of saints: an insight that the church itself took on from the earliest centuries. Mary’s ongoing role for the church is thus grounded, to my mind, in Old Testament images of Zion as a nursing, loving, nurturing mother for God’s people, Israel (e.g. Isa 66:12-13). Whatever we may think or feel about the institution on occasions, the church as the communion of saints in heaven and on earth nurtures us in faith and gives us hope and comfort. That hope and comfort are embodied for me in Mary.

In this role, as representing the communion of saints, Mary points first and foremost to her son, Jesus. One of the titles for Mary which came to mean a lot to me is that of ‘Theotokos’, ‘Mother of God’, which means literally ‘the God-bearer’. This title was given to Mary at the Council of Ephesus in 431 CE. The point was not primarily about Mary but rather about Jesus and his sublime identity

---

---

as fully divine and fully human. To speak of Mary as the ‘Mother of God’ is to confirm that, even in the womb, the Child she carried was divine as well as human. The iconic tradition of ‘Hodegetria’ expresses this notion well: Mary is portrayed as pointing to Jesus; she is the one who shows us the way.

In that sense, Mary represents the mystery of the incarnation itself, God made flesh (Jn 1:14). The incarnation was made possible only through her courageous and generous faith. The Son of God’s first home was her body; the first face he saw, the first body he touched, was hers; the hands that taught him and guided him throughout his childhood were hers. Hers was the love and faith and intelligence that helped to shape him, humanly speaking (even in times of anxiety for her – e.g. Luke 2:41-51).

More than that, Matthew and Luke both tell us, independently of each other, that Mary was a virgin at the time of Jesus’ conception. Some Christians may struggle with this notion, despite its place in the Creed, assuming perhaps that she was the natural child of Mary and Joseph, or that Mary was seduced or even raped by someone else, perhaps a Roman soldier. I have come to accept belief in the virginal conception of Jesus, partly through the influence of Rowan Williams who himself believes in it and who shaped my theology and my Anglicanism in profound ways. It seemed to me also a small miracle to believe in comparison with the vast miracle of the incarnation, to which of course it points.

But the more I reflected on the virginal conception, the more it impressed me with its implications for women and women’s lives. Basically, in spite of both ancient (and modern) biology, this teaching places Jesus’ full humanity entirely at the door of a woman. God became male in Jesus, but God did so by avoiding entirely male generation. Matthew’s genealogy depicts a panoply of male begettings which, in the end, the Holy Spirit decides to bypass in favour of Mary alone (Matt 1:1-16). It thus makes Jesus a female-generated man who owes his humanity entirely to a woman. That seemed to me to have radical implications for women, challenging conservative traditions that downplay femaleness: firstly, for Jesus’s own identity and selfhood and secondly, for the substantial presence and leadership of women in the church.

Yet there are traditions that I find myself uncomfortable with in the more ‘catholic’ side of Christianity. I cannot accept the notion of the ‘immaculate

---

---

conception': that is, the view that Mary was born without sin. I can see no biblical basis for this idea. I do not doubt her goodness, but the Gospels can present her, on occasions, as misunderstanding Jesus and his ministry, and even trying to hinder it (e.g. Mark 3:31-35). To my mind, she is never depicted as sinless.

Nor can I accept the notion of Mary's perpetual virginity, even though the tradition itself is an old one. It is not, in my view, a biblical tradition. The most natural reading of Matthew 1:24-25 is that Mary and Joseph began a normal sex-life following the birth of Jesus, which resulted in Jesus having a number of younger brothers and sisters.

In all this, I want to keep Mary on the human side and not make the mistake of confusing her with Jesus himself or with the Holy Spirit, as has sometimes happened in the history of the church. Nor do I want to put her on pedestal beyond our reach. Yes, Mary is in one sense 'just an ordinary woman.' She is one of us who struggled with her life and faith. Yet the body of this very young woman, her faith, courage and love all helped to nurture Jesus, and that same nurturing love is available also to us in the church.

These are the some of the reasons Mary is important for my own theology and spirituality. The main one, however, is that she helps me to see Christ more clearly and more cogently, and grounds my faith in the great mystery of the incarnation. I am glad to be part of a parish in which the Mother of God is loved and honoured as the one who bears God within herself and who points us, first and foremost, to Jesus.



*The Theotokos of Smolensk (c. 1500): Hodegetria*

∞∞∞∞



---

## Looking Closely at the Nativity Stories

*(An adaptation of an Advent Scripture study series by Mother Robyn)*

We've probably all grown up with the Christmas story flowing in a seamless movement: the pregnant Mary, betrothed to Joseph, making their way from Nazareth to Bethlehem for a census. They find 'no room at the inn'; Jesus is born in a stable. Shepherds with their cute sheep are told by angels of the birth. They come to see the baby. Wise men arrive 'from the East', following a star, with their gifts of gold, frankincense and myrrh. Murderous Herod comes looking for the baby, so Mary, Joseph with baby Jesus escape to the safety of Egypt, and later return home to Nazareth.



Now that my first grandchild is about to turn three, I suspect I'll be challenging myself as to how I tell this story to her. It's not quite as straightforward as it seems. I want my grandchildren to love the Christmas story in all its wonder, but I also want them to grow into the Scriptures with a healthy questioning curiosity. Before looking further: for reflection:

***How did you first learn about the Christmas story?***

***Has the Christmas story for you become an amalgamation of both of the nativity stories?***

***How has this changed over the years (or not)?***

***Have you noticed or explored the differences between the accounts of Jesus' birth?***

---

---

*What stands out for you personally as a (or the) most significant part of the story?*

### **First Century (and earlier) story telling**

In first century story-telling, getting things historically accurate was not the objective of telling stories, or of the writing account of events – more important was conveying the *meaning* of the story being told to the storyteller's community, and the *revealing of truths*.

### **The Different Accounts of Jesus' Arrival Amongst Us**

Only Matthew and Luke have accounts of Jesus' birth and infancy.

Matthew and Luke's accounts are very different. Not necessarily at complete odds with each other, but each has a different scenario; each chooses bits to highlight, even embellish, in order to underline the meaning of this birth in the context of the community to whom, and in which, they write. Both of these writers are also keen to present Jesus as fulfilling prophecy as given in the Hebrew texts.

**Matthew** – his community was either in ancient western Syria or a southern Galilean city; written around AD 80-90; appears oriented to Jewish readers; probably a largely Jewish community.

**Matthew's account** - through the opening genealogy, allusions to biblical persons and events, and the explicit fulfillment passages, Matthew's infancy narrative announces that Jesus' birth is the climax of God's long story with Israel. In addition, Jesus is presented as epitomizing all of Israel's history -Matthew's story of Jesus is meant to embody and recapitulate Israel's history.

**Luke:** the gospel is thought to have been written around AD 85; uncertainty about where and for what community it was written –possibly Antioch or Rome. He was probably a gentile, well educated, good knowledge of the Hebrew Scriptures; there's some question about whether he really was the physician that tradition suggests he is.

**Luke's account** presents the birth of Jesus as the climax of God's promises to Israel.

- 
- There are many allusions to biblical figures: Samuel, Samson, Elijah, David, Abraham, Isaiah
  - Jesus' family observes both the Torah and Roman laws

Luke sees Jesus' coming as a time of decision for God's people. He will cause the rise and fall of many in Israel. For Luke, Jesus is the bringer of peace between Israel and the Gentile nations and for peace among the nations. Jesus is born amid the lowly of Israel, reflecting Luke's concern for the poor and for those who can rely only on God. Luke portrays Mary as the first disciple and the model of discipleship. She hears the word of God and keeps it.

***John's account:*** (no nativity/infancy story) John places Jesus in a cosmic context of eternal existence, and rejection ("in the beginning was the Word..."; "he came to his own and his own did not receive him"); whilst there's no story of his birth, the gospel writer comments on Jesus' incarnation. Jesus is presented as pre-existing; God coming to earth. Jesus continues and fulfils what God started with Israel. Fulness of life in God starts now in Christ and continues after death.

***Mark's Gospel:*** (no nativity/infancy story) From his first words, Mark launches us into a subversive story that presents the in-breaking of Jesus into a nation oppressed and crushed by Roman rule. Mark tells us: "This is *the* Good News! And it is about Jesus, the Son of God, not some emperor who styles himself divine!" Mark sets Jesus' first appearance within a context of wilderness and association with marginalisation

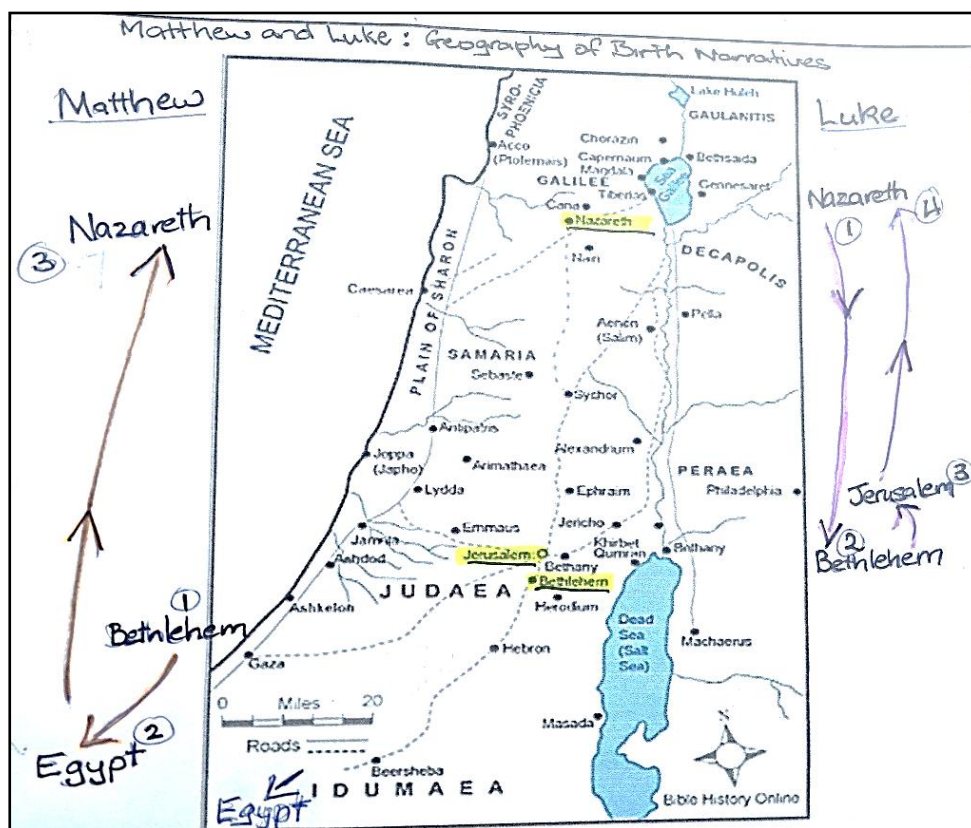
***Paul's*** "nativity" (Philippians 2:6-8) focuses on the incarnation as the self-emptying of God.

## **The Nativity Narratives from Matthew and Luke**

### **Different Places**

In **Luke's** narrative, Mary and Joseph are Galileans from Nazareth who travel to Bethlehem of Judah because of a Roman census. The newborn Jesus is placed 'in a manger'. They return home to Nazareth afterwards, stopping at the Temple in Jerusalem on their way.

In **Matthew**, there is no specific reference to where Mary and Joseph were living; the only place named is Bethlehem (Mt 2:1 – “*In the time of King Herod, after Jesus was born in Bethlehem....*”). It might be assumed they lived in Bethlehem already. There is no census, no inn. The story moves quickly into the little family fleeing to Egypt to escape the murderous designs of Herod the Great. After a time there, rather than return to home territory in Judea, they relocate to Nazareth in Galilee. It seems that Nazareth is a new place for them to call home. (Mt 2:19-23)



### Different Characters in the stories

The Evangelist **Luke** repeatedly compares Jesus with John the Baptizer, who is not mentioned at all in Matthew’s infancy account. In Luke it is lowly Jewish shepherds who first learn the news. Luke tells us In Luke’s account it is Mary who shines, portrayed as the one who hears and keeps God’s word. Luke tells us that the child is publicly proclaimed in the very heart of Jerusalem by Simeon and Anna. Luke portrays Jesus’ family observantly going to Jerusalem, but in Matthew they avoid the city.

In **Matthew’s** gospel, the birth narrative is preceded by a genealogy of Jesus from Abraham down to Joseph and Mary. (Luke’s genealogy is presented at the

---

beginning of Jesus' public ministry and runs backward from Joseph to Adam). Matthew shines his spotlight on Joseph. It is Joseph who receives divine guidance in a series of dreams. Jesus' birth is detected not by shepherds, but by gentile astrologers, the magi/wise men. King Herod in Jerusalem hunts throughout the region for the infant Jesus to kill him.

**Luke's** narrative includes a number of unique "songs" or "canticles," whereas Matthew offers a series of distinctive "fulfillment passages" that relate Jesus to Israel's history.

### **Other Features of the story**

**Pregnancy appearance of angel:** In **Matthew:** Appears to Joseph during pregnancy to tell him not to worry about the baby. In **Luke:** Appears to Mary before the pregnancy to tell her she will become pregnant by the power of God.

**Adoration:** In **Matthew:** Magi follow a star until it stops. They bring him gifts and worship him. In **Luke:** Shepherds who were watching their flocks by night came to worship him. They have been told of the birth by a multitude of angels on a hillside.

**Action of parents following birth:** **Matthew:** Flee from Bethlehem to Egypt because they fear Herod will try to kill the baby. The time frame is unclear – the arrival of the magi and taking refuge in Egypt could have been many months after Jesus' birth. In **Luke:** They stay in Bethlehem where he is circumcised on the 8th day. They also stay in that town for another 30 days to present him at the temple after the Purification. There is no account of magi or a murderous Herod.

**Jesus' growing years:** In **Matthew:** Angels appear to Joseph in a dream, and he follows their instructions. The parents return from Egypt, but do not go back to Bethlehem because they are afraid of Herod's son. They move to what appears to be a new town- Nazareth. In **Luke:** After completing the requirement of Jewish laws – circumcision and presentation at the Temple in Jerusalem - the parents return to "their own town", Nazareth.

### **Similarities**

- The names of the parents are Mary and Joseph (Mt. 1:18; Lk. 1:27)



- 
- Joseph was a descendant of King David (Mt. 1:1; Lk. 1:27; 2:4)
  - An angel foretells Jesus' birth (Mt. 1:18-25; Lk. 1:26-38)
  - Jesus was born in Bethlehem (Mt. 2:1; Lk. 2:4-7)
  - Herod the Great was king of Israel (Mt. 2:1; Lk. 1:5)
  - Jesus' family settles in Nazareth (Mt. 2:23; Lk. 2:39)

### **Unique Features in Matthew**

- Focus on Joseph
- Joseph resolves to divorce Mary (1:19)
- An angel visits Joseph (1:20-21)
- The angel tells Joseph to name his son Jesus (1:21)
- Wise men from the east visit the family (2:1-12)
- The family escapes to Egypt (2:13-15)
- Herod's slaughter of the male children (2:16-18)
- An emphasis on fulfilled prophecies (1:22-23; 2:5-6, 15, 17-18, 23)

### **Unique Features in Luke**

- Focus on Mary
- The angel Gabriel visits Mary (1:26-38)
- Mary's song of praise (1:46-55)
- Census - reason for travel to Bethlehem
- Angels visit the shepherds (2:8-21)
- Mary and Joseph take Jesus to the temple (2:22-38)

### **Some textual and historical bits and pieces**

**Inn:** **Luke 2:7** The word mostly translated as "inn" more commonly meant a guest room in a home, or room in a lower portion of the home which often was used to accommodate the household animals. Bethlehem was a small town off the beaten track, and may not have had an inn, but, as was the important custom of hospitality, homes would have had guest rooms for travelers.

**Date:** In **Matthew:** Jesus' birth occurred during King Herod's time. Herod died in 4 BC. In **Luke:** Quirinius became the governor of Syria in the year 6 AD.

---

**Census:** Some historical problems here: Historical records show there's no record of a registration for the Empire under Augustus. Also, the Roman system of registration did not require people to return to the place of family origin. The question then is –not 'how can we reconcile this?', nor is it a suggestion to discount Luke's story as 'untrue'; but we can explore - why has Luke recorded the story this way? One general answer is that Luke (like storytellers of his time) was not interested in historical detail – his concern was more with meanings. The census could be no more than a story device to get Mary and Joseph to Bethlehem (House of David) for Jesus to be born there (foretold as birthplace of Messiah)

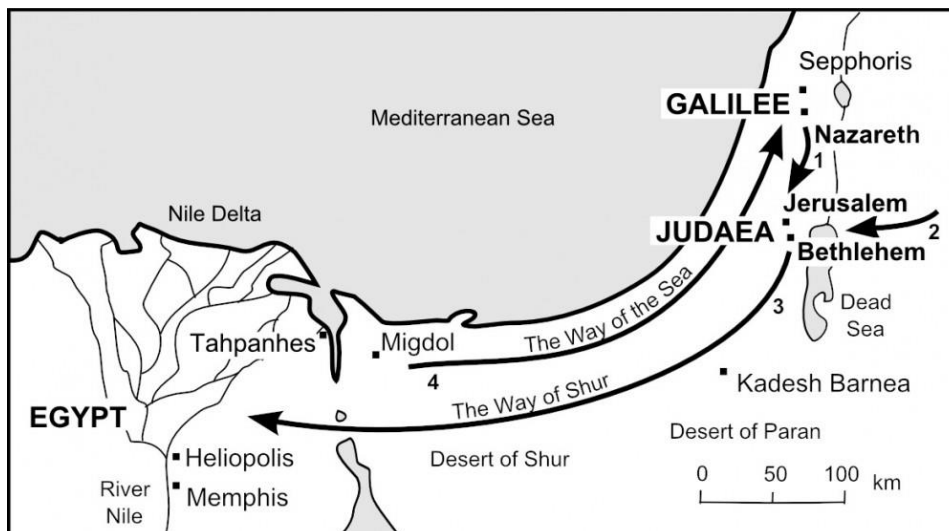
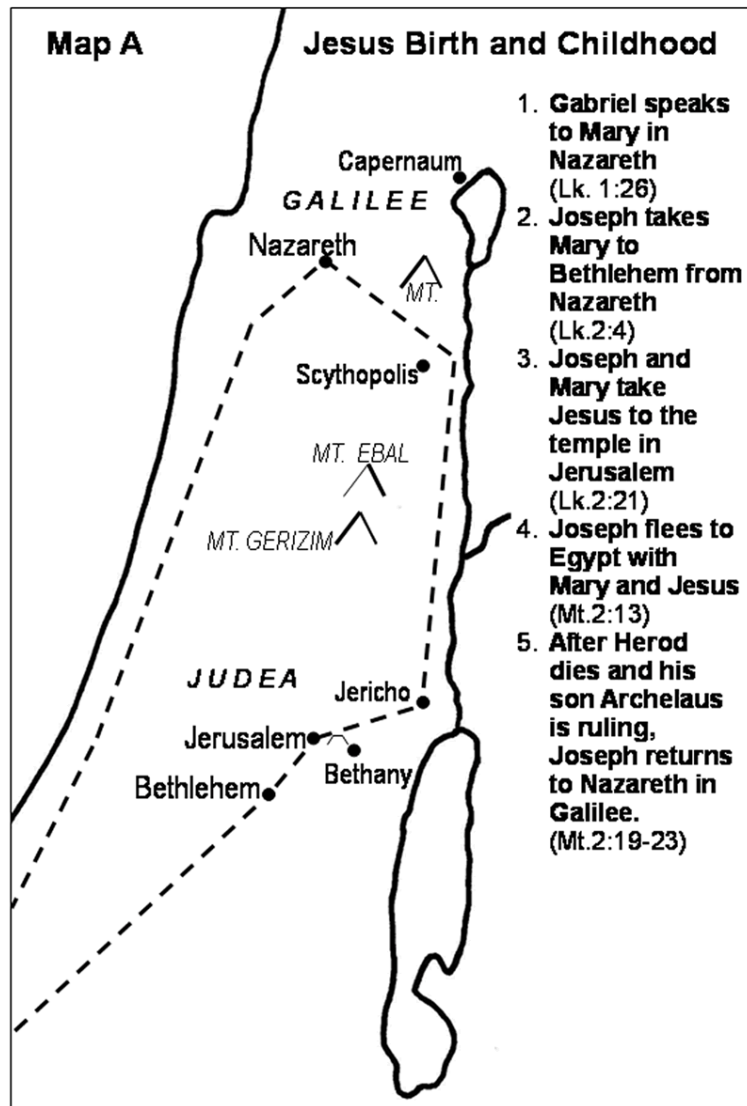
**Shepherds:** bottom of the social pecking order –regarded as sinners, rough, dangerous, marginal. God “lifting up the lowly”.

**Herod's Slaughter of the innocents:** Mat 2:16-18. no historical record of this – it would be expected that there would be a record, given the amount of other detail (even the atrocities) recorded about Herod's rule

**A question for reflection**

In what ways is your reading of the Scriptures affected when it becomes apparent that there are historical or other inaccuracies or problems in the Biblical texts?

*Don't forget to tune into Mother Dorothy's Delta Study on Advent 3 (12 December) on Matthew and Luke's accounts of Jesus' birth*



○○○○○

---

## A Journey To, and With, St Mary's North Melbourne

*Rosie Moloney*

Growing up in Sydney in the 1980s, my family and I went St George's Paddington, which was, and still, is a pocket of liberal progressive thought in the Sydney Anglican diocese, with a strong emphasis on social justice. The parish had hit some sort of demographic tipping point in the early 1980s and as a result there often seemed to be more kids than grownups. To me, church was a community of fun and raucous kids, interesting and kind grown-ups, and the promise of a pastry afterwards from the patisserie next door.

In high school I was introduced to a local evangelical church, which had a youth group and evening service for young people, with a band and groovy songs (also, excitingly, boys). It had an electric effect on me (not just because of the boys). I had never before thought of Christianity as, not just a set of things you knew and did as part of ordinary family life, but something that made you “feel” at a deeply personal level.

At youth group, people would speak in a startlingly direct way about “opening their hearts to God” and “where they were at with their faith”. And I noticed people recalling “when they became a Christian” - a specific point in time, powerful and instantly transformative, at which a light had been suddenly switched on.

I copied everything I saw others do, underlining passages in my bible and praying fervently, but my switch seemed to stay in the “off” position. After a few years, I drifted away. I had experienced no moment of sudden illumination and, moreover, felt increasingly alienated by the views I heard espoused by the church leaders on gender, marriage and sexuality.

When I moved to Melbourne in my twenties, one of my mum's oldest friends Rev Dr Erica Mathieson suggested I try St Mary's North Melbourne, parish of her “dear friend Rhondda”. “They do all sorts of interesting liturgical things” she said. (I wondered what “liturgical” meant.) It wasn't until several years later, when Will and I got engaged, that St Mary's crossed my path again – Will's aunt

---

Kate Redwood had sung in the choir here for some years, and it was close to where we lived, so seemed a good choice for the wedding.

Will and I paid a couple of visits to St Mary's before our wedding. Taking in the candles, incense and bells, my husband observed, rather awed: "This is Advanced Church. Like, church for people who are really into church".

But, we both liked the church, we liked the people and we liked the vibe. After we were married, I kept coming back. One morning Rhondda handed me a volunteering form and, to try and be as helpful as possible, I ticked every box, including one that said "serving". I am embarrassed to admit that I genuinely thought serving meant handing out cups of tea after the service. I realised my mistake when Fr Craig got me in for a detailed briefing peppered with psalm verses and obscure terminology, during which I scribbled frantic notes. "Crikey", I thought, walking back to my car afterwards, "This is Advanced Church".

Part of me wondered if I should really be starting with "Church 101". After all, I was a bit of a fraud. I was here because of some vague sense of belonging, or maybe nostalgia, drawn to the beauty of the service and the music, and I wasn't sure that was enough.

But I kept coming back to St Mary's, and every now and then something tiny would click into place. One among many was Geoff Jenkin's words at Phillip Bewley's farewell: "We all struggle with our faith". I cast some sidelong glances down the pews at my fellow congregants. *Really? You? Even you?*

Slowly, it has dawned on me that, perhaps, faith is not always an on-off light switch. Perhaps it is a journey, where occasionally, a candle illuminates a tiny corner of something infinitely enormous and complex.

Bringing my two boys to St Mary's each week has been a genuine joy for all three of us (well, four of us if we include my husband's appreciation of a quiet house for a couple of hours each week). I'm forever grateful to the congregation for its patience and kindness, to the incredible Harriet Jenkins for the energy she brings to Kids' Church each week, and to the other parents and grandparents I've met here, who have been wonderful sources of wisdom, strength and friendship.





---

## The Cup

*Robert Gribben*

*In the same way he took the cup also, after supper, saying, 'This cup is the new covenant in my blood. Do this, as often as you drink it, in remembrance of me.' For as often as you eat this bread and drink the cup, you proclaim the Lord's death until he comes. Whoever, therefore, eats the bread or drinks the cup of the Lord in an unworthy manner will be answerable for the body and blood of the Lord. Examine yourselves, and only then eat of the bread and drink of the cup. For all who eat and drink without discerning the body, eat and drink judgement against themselves.*

1 Cor. 11: 25-29 NRSV

*After supper, he did the same with the cup: 'This cup is my blood, my new covenant with you. Each time you drink the cup, remember me.' What you must solemnly realise is that every time you eat this bread and every time you drink this cup, you re-enact in your words and actions the death of the Master. You will be drawn back to this meal again and again until the Master returns. You must never let familiarity breed contempt.*

Eugene H. Peterson, *The Message* (same verses, paraphrase, 1994).

I have been disturbed recently to hear that some Anglican clergy are quite content that the Cup has been withdrawn during the pandemic and would be equally happy if it were not re-introduced. This essay is a personal response to the thought that the Cup may stay in the sacristy cupboard. I will set out some reasons why it ought



to be offered to the people in every eucharist, and I will discuss some of the difficulties as we return to something like 'normal' ecclesial life.

The reasons, as far as I was able to hear them, were matters of convenience, and some because sometimes the drinking is messy. Drinking the cup at communion is a solemn act, a chosen response to the eucharist which carries

---

implications for the way we live out of Christian faith. Other reasons down the ages have led to its withdrawal. The heightened materiality of mediaeval belief, so that the body and blood of Christ truly present but only lacking its ‘accidents’ (taste, feel, smell) and the possibility of real accidents (less easily repaired than dropping a wafer), caused the Cup to be withdrawn from the laity (and the cups to shrink in size). A great deal of careful theological and pastoral thought went into its re-introduction after the changes agreed on at the Second Vatican Council. The methods they chose differ from Anglican practice (e.g., self-service).

But Rome made another concession, in response to earlier fears – of HIV-AIDS, SARS and other viruses - the priest could offer *intinction*, that is, he would dip the wafer carefully into the chalice and place it directly on the communicant’s tongue. The idea was *not* that the communicant do their own dipping, and anyone watching will know why. The most bacteria anywhere on the human body is on the fingers.<sup>1</sup>

So, Anglican, Lutheran and Uniting churches who use the chalice in similar ways have all been confronted with real reasons for caution and concern. But, as the Government says, ‘freedom’ is coming.’ I have personally respected the careful way in which Anglican bishops have provided detailed instructions as to what is acceptable, and not, under the present threats to life and health. You may disagree with the policies of both government and the episcopate, but they have given us their considered advice.

My first point is that the Cup is a gift from our parent faith of Judaism, and anything which detracts from that legacy is a serious attack on the Catholic faith. The bread, of course, comes from the same context. There is some dispute amongst scholars as to whether the Last Supper was a Passover meal, but we might set that aside by observing that the writers of the New Testament (e.g., 1 Cor. 5:7) certainly drew on Passover language as they interpreted Jesus’s command. The Passover *seder* (service) involves unleavened bread and four cups of wine, drunk at different stages throughout the telling of the story of the Exodus and the eating of the meal. St Luke sets us a nice problem by mentioning two cups,<sup>2</sup> one before and one after the supper. Some have sought meaning by trying

---

<sup>1</sup> Thus, the equal care required with the hands which distribute the bread.

<sup>2</sup> So, Lk 22: 17 and 20. A scribe copying down Luke’s original text may have slipped up and doubled a sentence (‘dittography’).

---

---

to decide which of the four Jewish cups was involved, but this is unlikely to produce a fruitful answer.

We are also in the realm of symbol, as Jesus knew when he said something not in the Passover service, ‘This cup is the new covenant in my blood’. It is shocking language (note Petersen’s ‘*This cup is my blood*’!). We have all heard the church-dividing arguments which have followed from this, many the result of not facing the fact that symbols are inescapably multivalent. They do not mean *one* thing and they elude being specific. The believer is free, whatever the theologians declare!

The Cup declares its confronting message in some ways more graphically than the symbol of bread, but whatever we say, we would be the poorer without it. And as one colleague remarked, ‘He did say, “*Drink it!*”.’

So, how?

The shape of many chalices does not help. The late mediaeval small cup only needed to be drunk by one person, the priest. Many lips did not touch the rim. Too many modern chalices keep their inadequate design. Few cups in fact suggest by



their actual design that they are for communal use. If you ever see the magnificent two-handled Ardagh Chalice, 9<sup>th</sup> C Irish work (shown at the beginning of this article), kept in Dublin, you will see a cup meet for a crowd! Should its design not suggest generous sharing?

Many beautiful ceramic cups have been made in recent years, including wide-brimmed ones.<sup>3</sup> Some clergy are hesitant to adopt these, in the belief that a *metal* rim reduces risks of infection.<sup>4</sup>

---

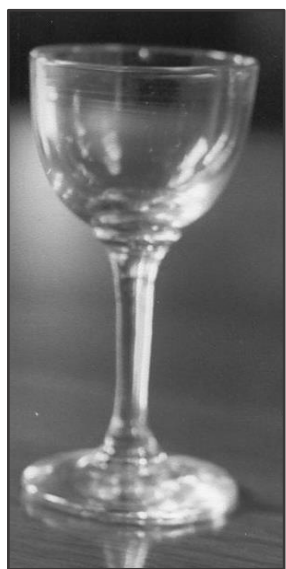
<sup>3</sup> I am myself quite sure the Holy Grail was not silver, and perhaps not even metal. Zwingli, at the Reformation in Zürich, replaced the cathedral silver with wooden chalices. The Puritans preferred modest pewter.

<sup>4</sup> I have consulted several medical scientists on this. None held that the metal itself destroys bacteria. Metal is certainly easier to clean, however, and one eminent medico emphatically stated that a clean linen cloth is much more effective in removing saliva than a paper towel or a wet tissue.

---

Since we have unthinkingly permitted the use of communicant intinction, and the recent virus will have deepened fears, we might take a leaf again from intelligent Roman rubrics and (a) choose a wide cup and (b) tip it carefully towards the communicant so there is only a shallow level of wine exposed to dip in. But again, Jesus said, ‘*Drink it!*’.

Some of these anti-cuppers nevertheless do not wish to accept the re-emergence in some places of individual cups. The little glass inkwells which were such a commercial success when the fear of infection first hit America in the late 19<sup>th</sup> C are the mere tip of the iceberg: think plastic, think disposable, and try not to think of one with a sealed wafer on top arriving in the mail for your private ‘participation’. And ‘private’ is the key word. Individual cups are the antithesis of the common cup. This was pointed out in the 1909 General Assembly of the Church of Scotland when these began appearing. They thought them unbiblical and apostolic! Sharing in the one cup is a core symbol of the unity of the Body, an essential part of the biblical notion of *koinonia* (‘communion’). ‘The cup of blessing which we bless, is it not a sharing in the blood of Christ? Because there is one bread, we who are many are one body’ (1 Cor. 10:16-17).<sup>5</sup> The single loaf (already largely lost) and the single cup are constitutive of the church itself.



There have been some attempts to ameliorate this fragmentation, since many congregations have voted with their feet, as it were. The shot glass (actually called that in some advertisements) is a later development. Scots Church, Hobart preserves some early miniature glass chalices, forming a visual link with the central cup. Some Scandinavian and American Lutherans use a small individual metal chalice and sometimes ceramic ones. Communicants collect one on the way to the altar rail, where their cup is filled by a server with the large chalice *with a pouring lip*. The latter thus provides another way of drinking from the one cup without touching it. I leave the judgment on these virtuous attempts to you.<sup>6</sup>

---

<sup>5</sup> Note, incidentally, that Paul, like Luke, can place the cup before the bread.

<sup>6</sup> The cups must all be washed afterwards and washed thoroughly if the glasses themselves are not to retain infection.

---

---

Perhaps I have taken the thoughts from unhappy parsons too seriously but having lived with what has happened in the Uniting and other Protestant Churches, I am not inclined to treat the matter lightly. We need to ponder these things in our heart – for certainly people’s feelings are involved – and I am prepared to wait until those who with the doctrinal and pastoral responsibility have come to their judgment. But I simply cannot imagine the holy eucharist without the holy Cup.

Robert Gribben



## Cyrene

*Geoffrey Jenkins*

The Jewish Encyclopedia contains an entry for Cyrenaica in North Africa, and its main city Cyrene. This entry, inspired by the presence there of a very substantial Jewish population dating back before 300 BCE, mentions two particular citizens known by name, just two.

One is familiar to us from the synoptic gospels, namely Simon of Cyrene who was obliged to carry the cross of Jesus to his crucifixion.

More on Simon soon, but first let us ponder the life and times of a far better knowable than known Jew of Cyrene, namely Jason.

This is the man who, apparently in response to the unknown author of the book we call First Maccabees, soon after the publication of that historical work (in about 130 BCE) wrote in Greek a vigorous response to it.

I Macc was apparently written in Hebrew of a classical style, such as we find for example in the books of Samuel, and not in the later style of say the original texts from Qumran. Remarkably, we have never found, even at Qumran nor quoted in the Talmuds, even one sentence of the work in the original Hebrew.

It is reasonable to assume therefore that it was translated into Greek soon after



---

first publication, and was then widely distributed in that form, while the Hebrew was lost. The important and early translation of the work into Latin, into Syriac, into Armenia and Georgian, must have been made from a Greek text that preserves many features of its Semitic original.

It is noteworthy that the Hebrew Wisdom of Ben Sira was written in 180 BCE and translated into Greek (or revised perhaps) in about 130 BCE, and therefore close to the date of writing of I Macc and about 30 years after the events of the Maccabean revolt. We have the Greek and Latin of Ben Sira and other versions, but in recent times we have recovered very substantial portions of the original Hebrew, including parts of a scroll found on Masada.

We should not regard the loss of the original Hebrew as a simple accident of transmission. Rather, it may reflect the lack of sympathy for the Jewish party to which the author of I Macc belonged. This other faction, namely the Pharisees, had their origins in this period and constituted the essence of the Rabbinic Judaism that exists to this day. The book in its Greek form was preserved by Hellenistic Jews and later by Christians who inherited these texts and preserved them when Hellenistic Judaism ceased to exist.

The author of II Macc tells us that he had available to him the work of Jason of Cyrene, from which he abstracted his own work (the present II Macc) as a sort of epitome. He does not think that everyone with access will read its five substantial books (an "ocean of words", he calls it). Even so, we get the distinct impression that the author of II Macc was fully sympathetic to the work of Jason, and made little if any attempt to subvert his implicit and sometimes explicit disagreements with the author of I Macc.

Of particular interest to us is the existence of a Latin translation of I and II Macc, which is in many places superior to the Greek as transmitted. This fact is perhaps no demonstration that the Latin is early, though other grounds suggest this. But intriguingly there are early translations into Latin of all of the important Jewish texts of this period, such as I & II Macc, the Wisdom of Solomon, Ben Sira and, from a slightly later time, IV Ezra. This suggests that these translations came about as an enterprise of Latin-speaking Hellenistic Jews, a category we need to rediscover as the origin in all likelihood not just of these Latin apocrypha but of the whole Latin Old Testament.

---

What importance does this evidence regarding Jewish Cyrenaica hold for us? We must surely recognise that Cyrene was an important centre of Jewish learning and intellectual enterprise. Five long books of history regarding events in Palestine Jason wrote, buying into the complex debates of the time, and revealing a dramatic subtlety and sophistication of thought.

For example, recent research has demonstrated that Jason knows the prophecies of Daniel 7-12, which also derive from this period. Not that he ever mentions Daniel's name, nor does he quote from his work, but he resists, if not resents, the lack of sympathy for Daniel shown by the author of I Macc and defends Daniel at every turn.

Before we turn to a brief discussion of Simon of Cyrene, let us speculate a little on what we learn from Jason:

- \* Several large Jewish populations became important centres of Jewish learning and informed Jewish opinion. Not just Alexandria, nor Babylonia, but also Cyrenaica.

- \* These communities wrote their original works in Greek but seem very soon to have translated these into Latin.

- \* These centres of Jewish learning conducted their own version of the history wars, aligning with the important sects, parties and movements of the first century which had their origins in the second century BCE.

- \* Texts were exchanged between these centres, including, if not especially, texts written during this period. These texts were soon translated into Greek, I think already in Jerusalem within the context of synagogues, and their further translation into Latin and Aramaic/Syriac would have followed soon after.

- \* There is not much evidence for any of this, and it is easy to imagine that there were other centres of Jewish learning in such places as Egypt beyond Alexandria, of Cyprus, of Saudi Arabia, about all of which we happen to know even less than we know about Cyrene.

---

Now to return to Simon, a much more familiar figure to us than Jason. Considering how incidental was Simon to the events of the first Good Friday, it is remarkable perhaps that he is mentioned at all, and the more so by name. Simon is named, we observe, in all three synoptic gospels, though the form of his name varies a little from one to another. These mentions are most likely because Simon remained associated at least indirectly with the earliest Christian movement(s) in Jerusalem, as is implied by the reference in Mark's Gospel to Simon's sons Alexander and Rufus. This second name by the way is distinctly Latin and not typically Jewish.

We should not think about Simon as happening to be entering Jerusalem on pilgrimage at the moment of the crucifixion of Jesus. Mark tells us that he was coming in from the field, most likely suggesting that he owned farmland and was therefore wealthy like Barnabas and Ananias and Saphira. This is already suggested by his name, which explicitly connects him with an important centre of Jewish learning for more than three centuries. He is not Simon travelling from Cyrene, but Simon associated with Cyrene but living in Jerusalem. This makes him an important figure in Jerusalem in his own right, apart from that one incident for which he is remembered by Christians.

Luke writing Acts tells us more than any Jewish source about the especially close connection between diaspora centres of learning such as Cyrene and the synagogues of Jerusalem. These were themselves centres of learning as well as places for pilgrims to lodge. Texts were copied and translated in these houses of learning, libraries were collected, and these texts were distributed around the Mediterranean world. Just as this process did not take long for I Macc, it will not have taken long for a gospel written in Jerusalem, as I think Mark's was.

So although we gain an overwhelming sense of the spread of Christianity from Jerusalem toward the north--Jerusalem, Judaea, Samaria and beyond—there is good reason to imagine that the gospels in Latin, Mark's perhaps especially, were circulating in North Africa long before they made it into other languages and realms.





## Reading at the Melbourne Cemetery

*Pam Cox*

Hard to believe that I shared a piece in Ave' St Mary's news publication a year ago. And the feelings of déjà vu are ever present.

After having had some truly wonderful freedom, moving out and about my friend and I decided to continue our morning coffee, cheese, biscuits and spiritual reading together at the Melbourne Cemetery. Why would anyone want to meet up with a friend to read some spiritually inspired book in the cemetery? Well for one there is deep peace and serenity here amongst the people who have gone before us now resting in the silence. It is a habitat for a variety of birds and many other creatures who hide away safely amongst the graves. Dog walkers and

people just out walking, school children on excursions. So lovely to see young people laughing and in general just being and experiencing the cemetery. But more importantly the visitors of family members and friends tending and caring for loved ones.

Our choice of book right now is 'Anam Cara' Spiritual Wisdom from the Celtic World' by John O'Donohue. A book I seem to return to time and time again. As John O'Donohue says '*I feel that our friends amongst the dead really mind us and look out for us*'. And sometimes as we are reading you get a strong sense that they are listening to us reading and chatting. There has been on a number of occasions where I have turned my thoughts to a past loved one for comfort. Carrying me through and comforting me in a particular time of need.

Nearby where we sit there are two young woman who died in their late teens early twenty's their graves facing each other. They died around the same time, according to their graves 1918. I wonder what their lives would have been like, and would they have shared our love of this place if they had lived on? And might



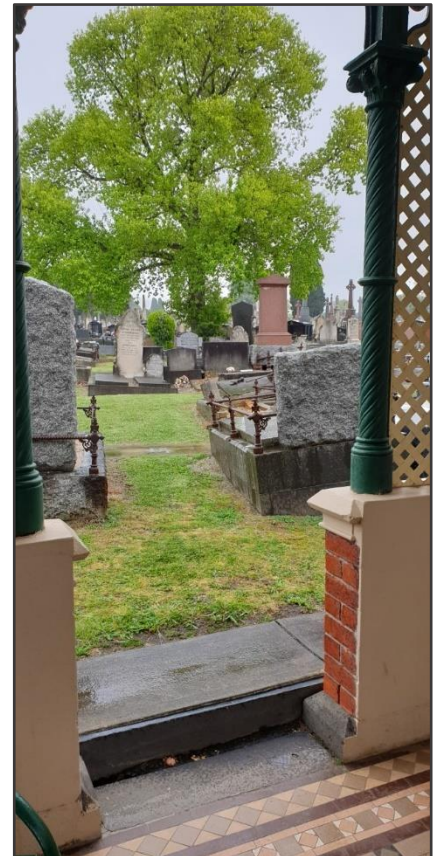


it have been the deadly flu pandemic that swept the world that claimed their lives as our soldiers began to return after World War1? I am sure they listen to our chatter, and I get a sense of their presence as I gaze out at their graves.

We have come to notice an elderly man who comes around the same time as us to sit with a loved one. He tenderly cleans and tidies the grave he is visiting. A true image of an ‘Anam Cara’, soul friend. There is a beauty in this tender moment, as I write sitting here in lockdown, this memory rises in me a reminder of what I am looking forward to once restrictions are lifted once more. Unable to visit my own loved ones I think of this gentleman and this separation from the rhythm of his Friday morning visits to the graveside of his loved one.

Our period of freedom has been short lived returning to lockdown, our cemetery reading interrupted once more and here we are again connecting once a week through a phone conversation. Where we are continuing to read ‘Anam Cara’. And a question coming up for us is, how do you view your time? And without fail the conversation begins with. “How has your week been? What have you been up to?” “Same old same old.” And yet when we begin to read, we are drawn into the imagination of what time truly has been and is for us. Even a simple walk along the Edgars Creek North Coburg near where my friend lives is packed with mystery and awe as she reflects on the poetics of her environment and the gifts of such a peaceful place in suburbia. Thankyou John O’Donohue.

Even a solitary walk as we perceive it becomes a joy. This is what I am discovering the longer we remain in lockdown. Just this morning walking with my spiritual





---

director, my beautiful ‘Chloe’ our standard poodle, we paused at a very non-threatening and safe distance to watch a mother Magpie and her baby fossicking for their daily breakfast a patient time of sustenance and learning not only for the baby magpie but for us. So much time given to this simple necessity of a baby magpie’s life. I’m not too sure what my ‘Chloe’ was thinking, she just stood next to me, slowly sitting down just watching leaning and resting her warm body against me, watching, just being. A quiet moment of total love.

This is the silence of another world, if we pause long enough to be in the mystery. Sharing through the poetic and lyrical landscape of this book we are discovering the blessings of what a simple pause can give. Sometimes our conversation turns to the everyday things we feel we have lost, or what is missing in our time right now. Surviving each day for us has become this simple sharing of some of the wonderful experiences we have had during our week. It is easy to see how with our busy lives we can become separated from body and soul. From the sacred and the holy.

O’Donohue has awakened our spirit to how we have neglected being and reminds us of where the invitation to simply pay attention is the healing and balance needed to live fully.

A memory as I reflect back prior to lockdown.

We were sitting in our usual place for reading in the Melbourne Cemetery when we heard this loud ruckus from a flock of birds in the trees nearby. What appeared to be black cockatoos had gathered, what a sight. A memory I still hold very close to my heart. From what we could tell they were yellow tailed black cockatoos. Local bird watchers at the cemetery noted seeing them at the same time in June. This particular cockatoo is gentle by nature, relatively quiet, except for when they are in their breeding call. Maybe this was the case on this particularly cold morning back in June. A very cold misty morning, the stillness so calming. The warmth of our steaming coffee being poured out of the thermos



---

adding warmth to this already blissful experience.

Gazing and sipping coffee. How good can it be?

Just sitting and reading or walking around the graves we often spot other local birds, Currawong, Rainbow Lorikeet, Eastern Rosella, you can hear the occasional wrens, the most inquisitive are the magpie larks, hopping up onto the graves, even jumping into where we are reading, watching and listening to us. I miss this time; I turn to my own local bird life on my daily walks around Flemington. Lots of parrots at the minute, Currawongs and Crows. Plenty of Magpies with their babies. The melodic warbling of some of the birds is truly as John O'Donohue so touchingly mentions '*True listening is worship – with the sense of hearing we listen to creation*'.

So where is my story going, it seems to be hopping all over the place, and what I am attempting to share is the value of true friendship in the good times and the not so good times. And I truly hold this friendship very close, especially where we are at in the world right now. It is so easy to lack motivation, and yet when talking and reading as we are doing, I am reminded of this sacred belonging with a friend.

I would like to close with a lovely Celtic Prayer and the eternal world as going home:

*I am going home with thee, to thy home,  
to thy home,  
I am going home with thee, to thy home,  
to thy home,  
I am going home with thee, to thy home of  
autumn of spring and of summer.  
I am going home with thee, thy child of my love  
to thy eternal bed to thy perpetual sleep.  
(trans. A. Carmichael)*



---

## The Cedars of Lebanon

*Judie Bainbridge*

It is said that there are 103 references to the Cedars of Lebanon in the Bible. Among the well-known are those relating to the building of the temple by



Solomon and the references to the power and might of God, particularly in Psalms 29:5 and 104:18. I am particularly fond of Psalm 29 and so was delighted to have an opportunity to visit the Cedars of Lebanon in the mountains to the south of Beirut.

The cedars have been plundered over the centuries and are now few in number, but the government is taking steps to protect the existing trees and the areas where they grow are fenced. The Cedar is depicted on the Lebanese flag, and it is still a very important symbol. Over centuries it provided much wealth for the country.

The journey to the home of the cedars was hazardous, as are all road trips in Lebanon, and not at all peaceful. We climbed high into the mountains leaving towns and people behind us. Eventually we arrived at the stone fence surrounding the Reserve and made our way through the narrow gate into the Shouf Reserve. Immediately we were transported to a place of great peace and to a feeling of true humility. The cedars are huge, rugged and misshapen, but you cannot fail to be in awe of them. There are some which are thought to be 2000 years old. In other reserves there are trees thought to be 3000 years old which possibly existed when Solomon was building





---

his temple and certainly were alive when Jesus walked on this earth.



To be in their presence is a mystical experience and to sit under one of these massive trees and look up to the sky through the leaves and branches transports you to another plane. It was wonderful to be able to sit in the silence of the forest and contemplate the immensity of creation and to be taken back to those historic events in a tangible way. As we prepare to commemorate the birth of Jesus this year I will reflect again on the resilience and long life of these trees and of all that has happened during their lives and the feeling of peace to be found in their presence.



---

**To Newcastle and Back October 2017 – September 2021:**  
*Exploring some roads less travelled!*

*Josephine Snowdon*

Sitting in the Pastoral Care office at the Alfred, I cast my eyes at the notice board. The flier announcing the 2018 Spiritual Care Australia Conference caught my eye.

My 18-month contract with the Anglican Diocese as a health Chaplain was about to finish, my private practice as a therapist had finished and my honorary lay ministry at St Marys had completed a three-year cycle, and there were many enthusiastic young people itching to engage in the ministry. My troubled thesis had come to a conclusion in the printing of an article on Inclusion and Disability in Worship in the *Journal of Health and Social Chaplaincy*. I was also free of family in need of support.

In the middle of this rumination came an idea, and an email was sent. Within thirty minutes a return email from the Acting Bishop of the Diocese of Newcastle appeared in my In Box, wanting to explore the possibilities of my coming to Newcastle for an interview with regards to a Chaplaincy position. So, after a trip up and back and interviews, Pippa and I set off to Newcastle for a position as Chaplain with the Samaritans Foundation, the Social Justice arm of the Diocese of Newcastle - an Anglicare Agency.

It took only two days with a quick stop over and we moved into a house in Hamilton, which is probably the most multi-cultural part of the city. I started to split between at the Broad Meadow office, the office being half a tram carriage minutes down the road and also the Head Office.

In those four years, I travelled the back roads of the Hunter and Upper Hunter, the Mid North Coast and the Central Coast spending time at varied parishes at their Sunday services and at forums reconnecting and supporting the connection of the Agency services with the Parishes, as well time at many Samaritans site offices around the diocese supporting the staff in the wide and varied service delivery they offer from prison chaplaincy, police chaplaincy, hospital chaplaincy, prison

---



---

release, youth homelessness services and homes, youth mental health services, domestic violence refuges, early intervention and disability, and forming relationships with Anglican schools for the agency.

During these years, I experienced fire and flood, participation in our disaster relief services, and had the task of developing spiritual awareness in and amongst a staff that had a strong social and humanistic approach to their work. I had the opportunity to learn a huge amount myself about indigenous spirituality and how to be more aware and approach a better understanding of the tasks of reconciliation for the First Nations people, I learned so much also about family and domestic violence and aftercare from prison release and was able to connect pastorally with people with disabilities.

As well as developing my preaching and chaplaincy support and networking skills, I was able to engage across Anglicare Australia and its related dioceses to further the development of positive thinking and mindset toward Inclusion for people with Disability in churches.

I guess things all come to an end and the difficulties posed by Covid were certainly large for this not-for-profit agency. A restructure at Samaritans was initiated by the Diocese along with all entities, schools, aged care and the chaplaincy. It was bumpy, tiring but fantastic ride in this role with excellent opportunities for giving, participating and learning in chaplaincy.

Not feeling called to retire, as was the option if I stayed, I gained a new post in Victoria. It continued to take me two months (couch surfing) to get permission to return to Victoria this year! Naturally, I to be back in Victoria where my family and my home church of 16 years are. As Fr Craig said at my leaving, “You will come back, won't you!”

∞∞∞∞

---

## Clarice Beckett – the forgotten artist

*Bob Bellhouse*



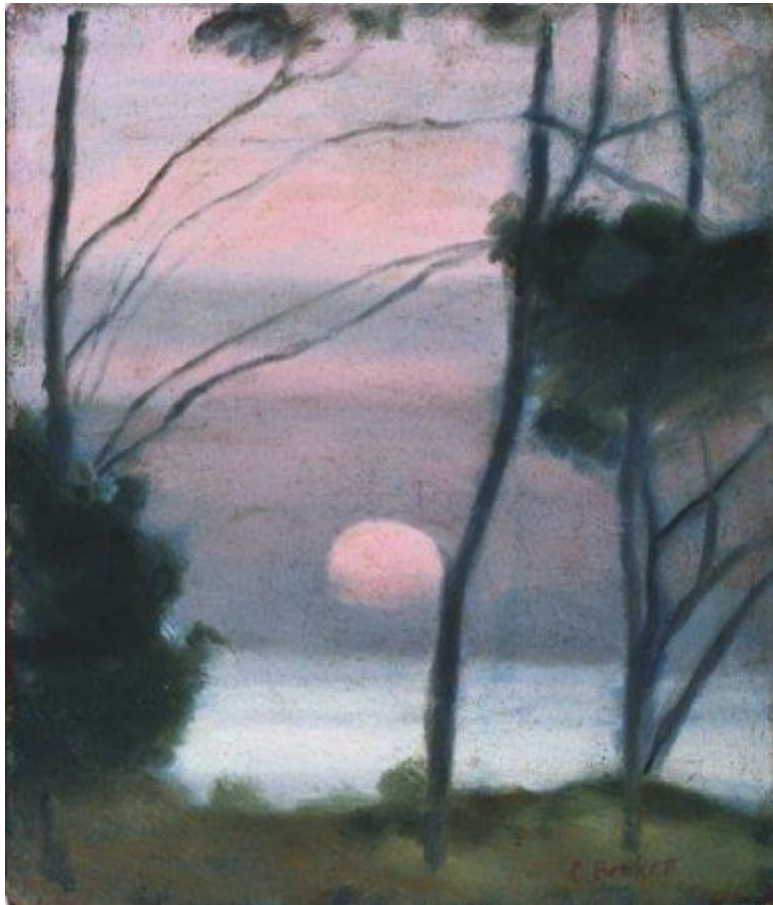
My partner, Trish, and I visited Adelaide to see the largest exhibition of Clarice Beckett's work ever to be exhibited. My interest was tweaked when earlier Trish had given me a beautiful calendar of Clarice Beckett paintings for Christmas. Not only did I find the paintings mesmerising, but they also held an interest as many were painted at Beaumaris where I grew up.

Beckett lived in the late 19th to early 20thC, spending time at an academy run by Frederick McCubbin, of Heidelberg school fame, and for a short period after under the tutelage of Max Meldrum. He ran an often-maligned Art school that taught a tonal method. While Beckett was influenced by Meldrum's techniques, her stint with him was a curse. Art critics favoured the realist painters of the day with their heroic pastoral landscapes, promoting their preferences with an unfortunate haughtiness,

---

“It is sad to see much pessimism that overshadows much of the work of Miss C Beckett... one would imagine from the little scenes that Miss Beckett has gathered in the name of Australian Art that Australia was in a continual state of fog’ (The Age, September 2nd, 1924).

Her father refused to provide her with anything other than the kitchen table on which to paint, and after her death he burnt works that she created later in life, works that friends described as more abstracted and spiritual.



But before writing about the exhibition there is another story, not only of Clarice who had a remarkable sense of vocation and fixity of purpose, but also of Rosalind Hollingrake who rediscovered Beckett’s work.

---

---

After Clarice Beckett's death in 1935 from pneumonia, caught while out painting in a storm at forty-eight years of age, she faded into obscurity. Not until 1971 when Hollingrake, opened a small gallery in South Yarra was C. Beckett noticed. In putting together one of her earlier exhibitions Hollingrake was invited to assess a private collection that was part of an inheritance. A range of early 20thC painters were among the collection, many of the more fashionable names, yet two paintings caught the young gallery owner's eye, and the more she looked the more the hair began to stand up on the back of her neck. Both paintings had been painted by a C. Beckett. The owner knew nothing of the paintings or the artist who painted them as he had little interest in art. As Hollingrake was hoping to exhibit, among other things, forgotten artists, these paintings stayed on her mind for the next five years. As she later commented, she knew nothing of C. Beckett other than the paintings, not even whether she was Australian.

Keith Dunstan, a journalist and friend, wrote a short piece in the Herald Sun, promoting Rosalind's gallery and ambition to exhibit unknown artists. Not long after a well-dressed and elegant elderly lady appeared in her gallery carrying a small parcel of five unsigned tiny pictures. She asked if the paintings were identifiable. Rosalind looked in amazement and responded, 'They're by C. Beckett.'

The woman began to cry.

'How did you get them?' asked Rosalind.

'She was my sister,' said Hilde.

After a discussion Rosalind discovered a treasure trove of paintings was stored on a family farm near Benalla, so the next day they were on the road. When they arrived, they found Hilde's daughter, who was occupying the property, had become tired of storing the paintings so she had moved them to a shed outside. The shed turned out to be a few posts with a wrought iron roof. Somewhere between 1800 and 2,000 paintings were sitting in dirt. Only 365 were retrievable.

Hollingrake did her best to have a number of the paintings restored and at her first exhibition she invited the curators of all the major galleries to view the work of Clarice Beckett, assuring them she had discovered a major Australian artist. The

---

---

first curator to view the exhibition was from the National Gallery of Victoria. As Hollingrake describes the moment, he swanned around for 10 minutes and told her he ‘wouldn’t touch the works with a barge pole!’

Next came James Mollison from the National Gallery of Australia, who in 1973 had purchased Jackson Pollock’s, *Blue Poles*. He began to look and asked a few pertinent questions that gave Hollingrake cause for optimism, so she moved away allowing Mollison to browse in his own time. Two hours later he came over to her with a list of 8 paintings he wished to purchase for the National Gallery.

And there began Clarice Beckett’s journey to a more prominent position as an Australian artist. On viewing her work for the first time the famous Australian abstract landscape painter Fred Williams formed a wry smile and commented to Hollingrake, ‘I think she got there before me.’

Hollingrake chose the Art gallery of South Australia for the recent exhibition as she believed the curator, Tracey Locke, had the greatest affinity with the artist’s work.

Locke titled the exhibition, *The Present Moment*. Many of the paintings are like a glimpse in time, ‘as if you are experiencing what she experienced.’ To create this effect, she played with perspective and technique to capture a transient yet enduring beauty, whether it was the shimmer of water lying on the sand, the lights on a rainy night of a passing tram, or the curiosity of the rising moon. I particularly appreciated one of the rooms where Locke not only displayed the paintings to demonstrate the effect of light and weather on her work, but also her gift as an artist in being able to realise her vision so uniquely.





While the responses to Clarice Beckett's work in her lifetime were often demoralising, she had her friends and admirers, one being the poet John Thomson who paid her a priceless tribute:

*She is lost, her force is not annulled,  
For when the moon or sun  
Kindles the trembling gauzes of the air,  
And when the blind machine of sea and sky,  
Grinds up soft light with mist and flying spray,  
and weaves from rosy whorls and tufts of green  
And spots of cloudy gold and stripes of grey,  
Weaves a translucent ever-flowing screen  
Which often slips unheeded by,  
Then all that she has been and felt and done  
Wakes in the living and assists their sight.*

∞∞∞∞

---

## Living with Dementia

*Rhondda Fahey*

It was not my choice to find myself parked in a Commonwealth funded facility for the extremely demented in Melbourne's outer west for four locked down months earlier this year. I was in need of good transitional nursing and, Royal Park having closed this section and the new unit at Footscray not having opened, there was a serious dearth of suitable beds. Some deal was done between state and commonwealth health departments, and I ended up sharing a room, indeed a nursing home, with my worst fear.

You don't think much about dementia when you are young – at least I didn't. It was only when an elderly relative with advanced dementia came to live with us in the 1970s that the impact of the disease became obvious. As I got older and knew of more and more people becoming not just confused and a bit forgetful but disengaged from reality and unable to care for themselves, that I became very afraid of the disease and its consequences. Every word finding difficulty and every lost detail of an event loomed as early symptoms. Then in July there I was, living under the same roof, even sharing the same room, with the extremely demented and their carers.

And the carers were amazing. They were all two or three-year trained nurses and loved their work and their patients. One day, during a conversation about the diversity of dementias, one of them asked me would I rather my body failed or my mind? To me, if you'll forgive the bad joke, this was an absolute no-brainer. 'My body, of course, I'm petrified of losing my mind. What about you?' She answered that if her mind failed, which was her preference, she knew that she would be kept safe and clean and fed and loved by nurses like her. While I never came round to this point of view, I did gradually understand the total dependence of the extremely demented and the vocation and loving generosity of the nurses.

In spite of the wonderful nurses, the nursing home was a sad place. Each resident, once a child full of potential, a young person full of hopes and dreams, was now dependent on others for cleanliness, sustenance and other maintenance. There was no hope, no future, I kept myself going by taking advantage of the latest technology to stay in touch with the outside world. I read on Kindle, talked with friends on my mobile, zoomed in to morning prayer at St Mary's and Canterbury,

---

---

attended church and talks on Youtube. I observed the lives and activities around me. If I tell you some of them now, it is not to make you sorry for me or for the other residents. It was ultimately not a bad experience but a spiritual one.

Holly, with whom I shared a room, lived with fear. She was so afraid that she resisted the nurses' attempts to keep her clean with cries of 'Don't touch me! Don't hurt me!' I wondered if she had been a victim of domestic violence. To avoid being showered she would get up during the night to wash herself and rotate her clothes. The nurses would wait until she dressed in something different to take the least clean to the laundry. Holly appointed herself my carer, often switching on the light in the middle of the night and peering close to my face to check that I was okay, "Are you all right, darl? Just relax. I'm looking out for you." And off she'd go, patrolling the corridors, keeping watch, holding her toy lamb, until a kind nurse brought her back and tucked her in again.

Many of the residents had soft toy babies. Another wanderer, clutching a very large bear, walked the floor much of the night, trying to get out of the building and go home. But nothing could compare with a sweet little Irishman called Kennie. Kennie had been a warder at Pentridge and was obsessed with keys and tidiness. He spent his days and nights popping into other people's rooms to tidy the bedside tables, incidentally liberating any loose possessions. It was sensible to take everything with you if you left your room otherwise it would find its way into Kennie's best hiding place, under his nappy, and later be abandoned in the linen cupboard or at a nurses' station, or, well, almost anywhere. Some of his spoils were never found.

Most of all Kennie wanted to get out and go home. He'd bang on the outside doors for hours. He'd come into my room and ask if I knew where the keys were kept because he had to 'get home for dinner' or 'meet his brother' or 'get back to work for an emergency.' My answer that we were all locked in because of COVID satisfied him only until he walked out through the doorway. Almost immediately he'd be banging on the door again and back in to ask if I knew where the keys were kept. The sad truth was that almost all the ambulant, talking residents wanted to go home even though they couldn't have told you where or what home was. It stood for a time and place where they had been secure and loved.

Some people, well beyond voluntary movement or talk, slept most of the day and night, and were wheeled about the premises to catch the sun's warmth, cocooned,

---

---

I hoped, in dreams of happier times. One of these, a wraith of a woman, was accompanied by her husband. He told me he had loved her since she was seventeen and loved her still. Until the COVID lockdowns struck, he had visited her daily to feed her and help care for her. Rather than give up this contact, he had moved into the home, renouncing his freedom to sit with her, holding her hand and murmuring his love.

Another lady played the piano most of the day, always wearing a hat. Others screamed or shouted or sang. They were all different. Their diagnosis was the same, but the disease affected them differently. When, initially, I complained to the nurses and doctors about Kennie they would say, ‘Oh he’s just a poor old man. He can’t help it’.

And he was. And he couldn’t. And like all dementia sufferers he had done nothing to deserve this fate. How comforting, I sometimes thought, if one believed in Purgatory because then one could believe that dementia sufferers, having thus been purged of their sins and become as little children, would be welcomed immediately into the presence of God. And then, one thought leading slowly to the next, I realized that they were already in that glorious Presence though seeing through a glass darkly.

I’m still frightened of dementia but not as much as before. No-one would ever move into a nursing home with me just because they loved me, except for a loving God who has gone before me to meet me there. I believe and trust in this God, and, less securely, in a government recently shamed into spending more money on nursing homes, and in a health system where loving nurses care for dementia sufferers. Thus I can confidently commend those who are confused and living with dementia to almighty God and how better to do this than in the words from the 1662 Book of Common Prayer in the Prayers and Thanksgivings UPON SEVERAL OCCASIONS, specifically the Collect or Prayer for ‘all sorts and conditions of men’:

Finally, we commend to thy fatherly goodness all those, who are in any ways afflicted, or distressed, in mind, body, or estate; that it may please thee to comfort and relieve them, according to their several necessities, giving them patience under their sufferings, and a happy issue out of all their afflictions. And this we beg for Jesus Christ his sake. Amen.

---

## Something to Sing About!

*Christine Rodda*

By way of introduction, although my husband, Elsdon Storey and I met during our medical course, it was our shared love of singing that brought us together. Some of you may remember an article I wrote for this Newsletter in 2017 about my first experience of singing in an opera chorus, for Melbourne Opera's production of Wagner's "Lohengrin". Having stepped down as Unit Head of Paediatric Endocrinology at Monash Medical Centre several years previously and moving to a less demanding position at Sunshine Hospital, for the first time in many years I had the time to be involved in such a venture, and it was an inspirational experience. Following "Lohengrin", I sang in the chorus for another of Melbourne Opera's Wagnerian operas "The Flying Dutchman" in 2019 and in Beethoven's "Fidelio" in 2020.



Melbourne Opera's production of Verdi's "Macbeth" was staged at her Majesty's Theatre in May this year and performed to critical acclaim! It may have been considered a rather gloomy choice given the COVID pandemic, which continues to cripple the music industry.

Singing in particular is recognised as being many times worse in spreading COVID compared with speaking quietly. Why had Melbourne Opera chosen to put on such a long opera, demanding a large chorus of witches, soldiers and peasants at this time? As you can see from the photograph above, it was indeed a large chorus. My head and left shoulder can just be seen at the left-hand end of the back row! COVID aside, Macbeth provides a wonderful vehicle to showcase an outstanding coloratura singing actress, who has an impeccable vocal technique



---

and can convey the treacherous and manipulative character of Lady Macbeth, a role that few sopranos on the international stage have conquered over the years. Melbourne Opera is also gaining a reputation for their fine chorus work. So, despite COVID travel restrictions, and with fortuitous access to local Australian opera singers -usually engaged in singing roles overseas or otherwise unavailable - to sing the 11 principal and various minor roles, and the large chorus required to stage this opera successfully, Melbourne Opera was in a strong position to perform this demanding work. Returning to the role of Lady Macbeth, an absolutely stunning and spellbinding performance was provided by Melbourne's Helena Dix, with the role of Macbeth magnificently sung by baritone and fellow Melbournian, Simon Meadows. Macbeth, the manipulated and tormented husband who Lady Macbeth wants to be King of Scotland at all costs, is utterly conflicted about these ambitions. This drama was convincingly played out by these two throughout, in their solos and duets, and on a shared stage with the chorus.

As an opera singer, Helena Dix has spent recent years at the Metropolitan Opera House in New York and last year in London, where in April she tragically developed life-threatening COVID complicated by a large pulmonary embolus. After some time in an Intensive Care Unit, Helena slowly rehabilitated at her home in London, initially hardly able to sustain even a note or two. A year later, after her successful rehabilitation, Miss Dix returned to Australia and the operatic stage to sing the role of Vitella in Mozart's "La Clemenza di Tito" in the ACT. Meanwhile the chorus started working on Macbeth, and given the demands of this opera, I was grateful that my retirement as paediatric endocrinologist at Sunshine Hospital coincided with commencement of chorus rehearsals. At our first rehearsal the excitement was palpable, being able to sing together again after more than a year. The last occasion had been in Beethoven's "Fidelio" in February 2020, just before Melbourne's first COVID lockdown. However, I must confess, even though there was no COVID in the community at that time, to feeling a little nervous about singing with so many other singers without masks, and relieved that due to warmer weather at the time, we were able to achieve good cross ventilation by keeping a couple of strategic external doors open at the rehearsal venue. Some of the chorus members, including myself, had also received their first COVID vaccinations. However, the level of professional responsibility required remained high with regard to OH&S. This meant strict adherence to QR code sign in, not attending rehearsals or performances if unwell, getting COVID

---

tested if unwell, and not attending rehearsals or performances until negative tests were obtained. Production week was also extremely demanding for all, with consolidation of all the Italian lyrics together with at times challenging choreography and several costume changes, particularly for many of the chorus members. Yet it was all worthwhile when it came to the actual performances, singing such glorious choruses, and hearing the wonderful soloists. Helena Dix's performance would have been considered stunning pre-pandemic, but for me as someone also medically trained, I was absolutely awestruck by her performance and so grateful to modern medicine that enabled her to survive and to return to the operatic stage.

The final performance was recorded by Melbourne Digital Concert Hall, which was established during Melbourne's 2020 COVID lockdowns to support online enjoyment of quality music performed with or without audiences, and with all proceeds going to support the performing artists. This last performance was also particularly poignant as it was Helena's 41st birthday, and following the curtain calls, the entire cast sang the most wonderful "Happy birthday" to her on stage – may she have many, many happy returns!

Returning to the original choice of Verdi's opera "Macbeth", it is rarely performed in its entirety due to the demanding role of Lady Macbeth and the large chorus required. Yet despite the gloomy subject matter of Macbeth, its themes of politics and treachery, and their impact on ordinary people remain remarkably contemporary. Macbeth was also a personal favourite of Verdi's throughout his long lifetime, and indeed Verdi had greatly admired Shakespeare from his youth. Macbeth was the first of his three Shakespearian operas, and to construct the necessarily streamlined dramatic interpretation required for opera, he simplified Shakespeare's original dense and complex script, and focused on Macbeth, Lady Macbeth and the witches (expanding Shakespeare's original number of three by tenfold!). Verdi himself established the dramatic construction of this opera before giving it to his librettists to develop further.

The opera successfully premiered in Florence in 1847, however an 1865 revised version performed in Paris was very poorly received. Verdi was criticised by many that he did not understand Shakespeare, and this wounded him greatly. Yet as an opera, Macbeth has stood the test of time to convey "theatre, patriotism and character" as Verdi intended. Melbourne went into lockdown immediately

---

---

following that memorable final performance, but even COVID had not been able to prevent this production of Macbeth!



## **The King of Instruments and I**

*John Poynter*

My father was an organist. And so was my sister. And so was an uncle. And so were two aunts. That royal instrument is and will remain part of my life, even if the word ‘King’ is discarded as gender-discriminatory. A four-stop Fincham chamber organ stands beside my desk, a pretentious acquisition, like the various other instruments I have collected but cannot play.

My role has been that of listener, although occasionally I have had other tasks in support of the instrument and its players. Also by my desk is a little six-inch wooden pipe, produced in 1995 as a memento of the 25th Melbourne International Festival of Organ and Harpsichord, an organization in which St Mary’s Anglican Church North Melbourne was deeply involved. For a few years I chaired MIFOH. The Festival no longer happens, but the pipe still gives a cheerful toot.

It is a long time since our distant ancestors discovered that they could make a special sound by blowing air into a pipe. They began to devise means of directing wind into several pipes at the same time: the bagpipe—once described as a sound best heard over water, preferably the Atlantic—was one early example. But so much progress was made over the ages that by the nineteenth century, when Sir George Grove first published his Dictionary of Music, the organ was described as ‘the most perfect musical instrument that the ingenuity of man has hitherto devised’; and a later edition asserted that ‘the organ is, together with the clock, the most complex of all mechanical instruments developed before the Industrial Revolution’.

The intricacies referred to extended beyond an extraordinary variety of pipes and of ingenious mechanisms for attaching them to keyboards. The means of producing and distributing wind sufficient to make many pipes sound at the same

---

time was a special problem, which intricate bellows, and occasionally the application of water and wind power, never sufficed to solve. Human muscles—in one English cathedral those of eight men—long remained essential. Only the eventual invention of electrical power enabled one person to play a large pipe organ without human assistance; in the 1890s, coincidentally, the organ had to concede its primacy in complexity to the telephone exchange.

By that decade my father, one of a succession of Robert Poynters, was deeply committed to the organ and its music. A Victorian in both senses of the word, he was twenty-six when the great queen died in 1901 and had already been presented with a small gold disc to hang on his watch-chain, engraved with thanks for his services as organist and choirmaster.

That was in the small north-east Victorian town of Alexandra, where he had spent four years as a newly qualified young pharmacist. In 1899 he moved west to Coleraine, where for the following half-century he practised pharmacy and then dentistry, and devoted much of his time to music, especially in Holy Trinity Anglican church.



*Figure 1 Robert Poynter at the Holy Trinity organ, circa 1925*

By the time I was born in 1929, last of his five children (in two marriages, separated by a few years as a widower) he had achieved a good deal. After much musical and social labour in the local community, he succeeded in raising funds for a fine small organ for Holy Trinity. Built and installed in 1921 by Meadway and Slattery, it was designed by Dr A E Floyd, organist of St Paul's Cathedral, a friend whose support father had enlisted and who gave an opening recital.

Father gained some regional reputation, invited to play for a performance of Messiah in the almost-city of Hamilton; and I recall a couple of private recitals he gave in Coleraine for an elderly Lutheran from the town of Tarrington—named Hochkirk until 1918—

---

who increasingly craved Bach as he aged. And before long father was giving lessons to my sister Anne, two years my senior. We had both been educated in infancy with readings from Dickens and Beethoven sonatas from father's Steinway, but when it came to keyboards, she revealed a talent I entirely lacked.

In this scene it was our summer holidays in Portland which gave me a role. St Stephen's was allegedly the first Anglican Church built in Victoria, though it remained unfinished, with a corrugated iron back wall. It had a fine organ, but Canon Coupe, the elderly vicar, refused to allow an electric motor anywhere near the premises. As soon as I was tall enough to reach the wooden handle projecting from the bellows I was instructed in its use.

A piece of lead attached to a cord had to be kept between two pencil line on the organ case: if allowed to rise above the upper mark—all too easy if a soft passage suddenly swelled into full organ—the organ would wheeze into silence, and my organist-father shout abuse.

Earlier blower-boys had made themselves comfortable in the confined space, scribbling odd comments on the case. Someone had carved a small observation hole in the screen between organ and nave, though all I could see through it was the raised pulpit towering above me. But here, at last, was a role at an organ that I could master. Even my precocious sister, whose agility at console with fingers and feet I much admired, needed me, or no note would sound.

That part I played, every summer, until war and boarding school interrupted Portland holidays. Later I did discover some ways of assisting Anne in Melbourne, when she was practising or performing, but after father died in 1948 and Anne moved to Sydney, I was reduced to mere listener again. And collector, of gramophone records, books and instruments.

I do recall—I hope accurately—one occasion when we spent a wartime Christmas in Portland and attended the morning service in St Stephens. When the Canon climbed into the high pulpit and began his sermon, I was surprised to see him regularly slap at the back of his bald head, as if troubled by summer flies. I then noticed, projecting from the small lookout hole, a narrow tube. It was a pea-shooter, and the boy on duty seemed well-practised in projecting dried peas at the back of the head of the figure a few feet above him. Fortunately, he was also



---

skilled at his proper task; when the vicar announced the last hymn and began his short descent from pulpit to sanctuary the bellows were charged enough for Hark the Herald Angels Sing to burst forth from full organ.

I understand that the St Stephen's organ is still hand-pumped. After all those centuries of essential service to sacred and secular music, the procedure is now rare. And, since sail has given way to steam, reducing perils on the sea, and aircraft are mustered to drop water on bushfires, the need for that form of manual labor is generally diminished. But the old truth remains: 'They also serve who only man the pump'.



## A Child's Christmas Out of the Ordinary

*David Keuneman*

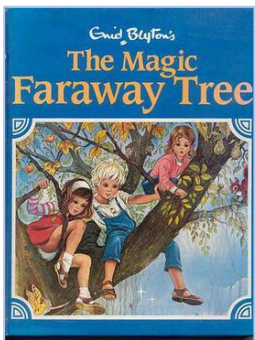
There is often a ritual to the way in which children celebrate Christmas. That was true in my case too, but one particular year stands out as an exception, when Christmas did not happen in the expected way. One can always wonder whether one's early childhood memories have been coloured by family stories, or photographs, or the accounts from others who were around. The events in this story are interesting, since I was only just reaching a sufficient age where a few genuine memories of my own might have remained with me for life.

I have noted elsewhere that I spent most of my childhood in the south Asian tropics. Although the trappings of Christmas owed much to Europe, nevertheless for me as a child the normal place to spend it was among my friends and family in Ceylon (now Sri Lanka).



However, in a December just a few years after the second world war, when I was a few months short of five years old, my mother and I travelled to England from Colombo on the new passenger liner, the **SS Himalaya**. We were to spend Christmas with her parents in the north of England, in Lancashire, and planned then to stay on for a while. (As it turned out, the big girl next door to my grandparents later helped me to make a sizeable snowman; the first time I had seen snow.)

Somewhere during that December voyage to England (a journey of about two and a half weeks I think) I came out in spots. The ship's doctor was a retired surgeon who had more interest in his Brandy and Sodas than in the patients. He immediately decided that I would have to be confined to the ship's hospital quarters for the rest of the voyage, as I most likely had some dreadful tropical disease. The ship's nurse – a much more down-to-earth and experienced practitioner – evidently declared as soon as she clapped eyes on me that "this boy has Measles". She was correct, but by that stage the surgeon had made his call, and it would have been a loss of face for him to change his diagnosis.



So, I spent the rest of the voyage in the ship's hospital quarters. This did not worry me unduly, as I had already begun my life as a bookworm, and I was well supplied with tomes from the ship's library. This marked the beginning of my compendious knowledge of Enid Blyton, starting on this occasion with *Noddy*, then graduating to *The Magic Faraway Tree*. And Mum was allowed to visit me daily.

In the meantime, the alert message – that of this highly infectious child with the suspected tropical disease – had been cabled ahead to London by the surgeon. The ship arrived at the Port of London and pulled alongside at Tilbury Docks on 22nd December. Once the rest of the passengers had disembarked, mother and I were discreetly accompanied down the gangplank, me in a wheelchair. There on the dockside, in the gathering dark, was waiting an ambulance and attendants.

### *Passenger list for arrival of SS Himalaya, London, 22 Dec 1949*

NAME OF SHIP <b>SS HIMALAYA</b> Port of Arrival <b>LONDON</b> Date of Arrival <b>21st December 1949</b>									
Steamship Line <b>P. &amp; O. S. S. COMPANY</b> Whence Arrived <b>ADEN</b>									
NAMES AND DESCRIPTIONS OF <b>BRITISH</b> PASSENGERS									
(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)	(8)	(9)	
Port of Embarkation	Port at which Passengers have been loaded	NAMES OF PASSENGERS	CLASS	Age	Sex	Profession, Occupation, or Calling of Passenger	Country of Residence	Height	Weight
COLOMBO	SW LONDON	HOBKINS Arthur Leslie	Tut.	19	M	137 Southcroft Rd. Gosport, Hants.	Scot. Official	5' 10"	125
"	"	" HUGHES Robert	"	26	M	21, Desford Ave. London W. 11	Stenographer	"	"
"	"	" KENNEDY John	"	28	M	7, Newbury Street, Burnley, Lancs.	Teacher	"	"
"	"	" CRISP John Eric	"	31	M	Little - do - side, Reigate, Surrey	Chill	"	"
"	"	" HARRIS Gordon	"	33	M	2, Newbury Street, Burnley, Lancs.	Electrical Engineer	"	"
"	"	" HANLEY Daniel	"	34	M	2, Newbury Street, Burnley, Lancs.	H.D.	"	"
"	"	" HALL Ethel	"	54	F	2, Newbury Street, Burnley, Lancs.	Teacher	"	"
"	"	" JOHNSON Gordon	"	29	M	2, Newbury Street, Burnley, Lancs.	Student	"	"
"	"	" PEREIRA Rose	"	28	F	2, Newbury Street, Burnley, Lancs.	H.D.	"	"
"	"	" STENTON Constance	"	28	F	2, Newbury Street, Burnley, Lancs.	H.D.	"	"

I have an image of me and my teddy bear being put into the back door of the waiting ambulance, and of my waving goodbye to my mum. My destination, as it turned out, was the **Infectious Diseases Hospital for Seamen**, at

---

Gravesend. This had been established in the 1880s, on the opposite bank of the wide Thames River from Tilbury, as an isolation hospital for sick and quarantined seamen arriving in the Port of London. The hospital had no facilities for women, so my mother was told that she should continue on her way to her family in Burnley – up north in Lancashire – as she would not be allowed to visit me whilst I was isolated. She was to await instructions about when she could collect me.

I don't have much memory of the daily routine in the hospital at Gravesend. But also, I don't recall feeling any particular distress. I was in a room of my own, sitting up in a bed that was far too high off the ground for a child. The cubicles were half-timbered to chest height, with glass above that. One could see through to a maritime industrial scene in the distance.



I think that the place could accommodate some couple of dozen or more patients, usually sailors who had been brought off ships with some suspected condition requiring surveillance. But I don't recall that it was anything like full to capacity. Those burly sailors who did happen

also to be cooped up there were delighted to have a child around for Christmas, and they were pleased to try spoiling me as far as they were allowed. I think I remember one of them attempting to show me card tricks through the glass panelling. There were paper hats on Christmas Day, and turkey (or was it chicken?) followed by Neapolitan ice-cream – the first time of my life that I spent a Christmas Day in England.

I feel that time must have passed quite slowly for what was around a week. Whilst I myself don't recall my feeling anxious or upset, I can only imagine the anxiety felt by mum and her parents up in Burnley. But the British people had gone through the war being told what had to be done for the best, so I guess that there must have been an acceptance that the authorities knew what they were up to.

Anyway, sometime later, I think before New Year, my family must have been contacted and been told that I was clear of any dreadful disease, and so now I could be picked up. Mum and Grandad came down on the train and they arrived

---

to find me, apparently to their slight horror but not to mine, sitting up in bed with a large tray of outsize bangers and mash – true English thick sausages.

People say what a dreadful lonely experience all this must have been for me, but I don't believe that I felt at all scarred (or scared). When we arrived back up in Burnley, the Christmas Tree was still there in the parlour and (my second) Christmas for the year just came a little nearer to my Scottish grandmother's Hogmanay.

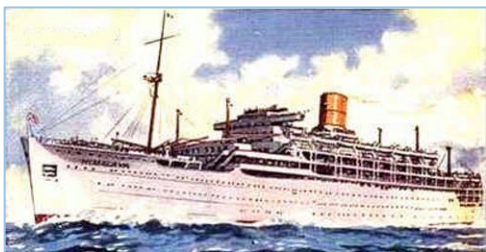
I realise that my memories of details are quite selective. For instance, I do remember the scene of my waving to mum from the ambulance as I was whisked off from the docks. But then I have no recall of the journey to get to Gravesend, which is on the other side of the wide lower reaches of the Thames. There weren't bridges for miles around. Construction of today's nearby Dartford Tunnel had only just been started. Did we go on a ferry from Tilbury to Gravesend? Most likely so, but you would imagine that I might have remembered that.

In general, I don't know how much I really remember personally from these experiences as a four-year-old. How much of the story have I pieced together from things which I have later been told?

But my memories of the Christmas in the hospital must surely be my own, since there was no other family present there to feed impressions back to me.

\*\*\*\*\*

As a coda to this tale, that journey on the SS Himalaya was the first of others for me, as the liner plied its way back and forth between Australia (which my own



family had not yet thought of as a destination) and England. However none of my other trips happened around Christmas time. On another of these journeys from Colombo, when I was nine years old, I caught Chickenpox and spent yet more time in the same sick bay. On this occasion I was older, and able to read my way through all of Blyton's *Famous Five* adventures. It was still the same ship's nurse on board, but she held more sway by now, and this time the



---

authorities in the UK were not alerted.

On this latter trip we spent some months in England during a beautiful late summer and autumn. By now, as a nine-year-old, I am sure that I was forming impressions which have truly stayed with me as my own memories. At the end of that stay in England we were booked yet again for a return to Ceylon on the famous SS Himalaya.

Just before our departure we were contacted by family friends in Newcastle with whom we had very recently stayed. Their young son, with whom I had played a lot, had come down with Whooping Cough. Not wanting to be refused passage, we didn't mention a word of this to the P&O Line before we had boarded and sailed. Fortunately I didn't whoop too badly, so I was not confined to the sick bay for a third voyage, and I was free to perfect my skills at deck quoits.



That was the end of my childhood steamer voyages. When I was eleven years old my mother brought me back from Colombo to England in order to go to secondary school. By this time air travel was coming in. Mum was very excited to notice that the then famous and handsome film actor James Stewart (who starred for instance in many Hitchcock films, such as *Rear Window* and later *Vertigo*) was a passenger just across the aisle and a couple of rows forward. The air hostess obviously got a bit over-excited too and spilt a drink in his lap. He was very gracious about it.

∞∞∞∞



---

*A FESTIVAL OF  
LESSONS AND CAROLS*



ALL WELCOME  
INVITE YOUR FRIENDS AND FAMILY  
19TH DECEMBER 2021 – 7.00PM

## CONTACT ST MARYS

Post: 430 Queensberry Street, North Melbourne 3051

E-mail: [office@stmarys.org.au](mailto:office@stmarys.org.au)

Web: [www.stmarys.org.au](http://www.stmarys.org.au), Facebook, YouTube.



Vicar: Rev'd Canon Jan Joustra

[vicar@stmarys.org.au](mailto:vicar@stmarys.org.au)

Mob: 0400 959 077

Clergy: Rev'd Canon Prof Dorothy Lee (Assistant Priest)

[dorothy1@trinity.edu.au](mailto:dorothy1@trinity.edu.au)

Rev'd Robyn Boyd (Associate Priest)

[robynboyd@fastmail.fm](mailto:robynboyd@fastmail.fm)

Rev'd Prof Mark Lindsay (Associate Priest)

[mlindsay@trinity.edu.au](mailto:mlindsay@trinity.edu.au)

Director of Music: Beverley Phillips 5286 1179

[bevjp@westnet.com.au](mailto:bevjp@westnet.com.au)

Wardens: Anne Sunderland [annes@jenkinsau.net](mailto:annes@jenkinsau.net)

Michael Golding [m-golding@bigpond.com](mailto:m-golding@bigpond.com)

Sam Miller [samcmiller92@msn.com](mailto:samcmiller92@msn.com)

Parish Administrator: Darrell Pitt.

Office Hours: 9.30 am to 12.30 pm, Mon-Fri.

### KOOYOORA

PROFESSIONAL STANDARDS  
DIOCESE OF MELBOURNE

The Anglican Diocese in conjunction with St Mary's Anglican Church North Melbourne does not tolerate abuse, harassment or other misconduct within our communities. If any person has concerns about behavior of a church worker, past or present. The Diocese of Melbourne is committed to doing all that is possible to ensure that abuse does not occur. All complaints of abuse are taken very seriously, and we do all we can to lessen harm. We offer respect, pastoral care and ongoing long-term support to anyone who makes a complaint. St Mary's Statement of Commitment to Child Safety is on our noticeboard and can be downloaded from our website [www.stmarys.org.au](http://www.stmarys.org.au).

**PLEASE REPORT ABUSE CALL 1800 135 246**

---

## MISSION AND VISION STATEMENT

*St Mary's Anglican Church, North Melbourne is an inner-city Christian community that strives to be faithful, inclusive and sacramental.*

*God inspires us to worship in daily celebration; to be caring, thoughtful and inviting.*

*In response to God's call, in the next three to five years we aim:*

- *To grow substantially in faith and numbers*
- *To create an inter-generational culture that values all age groups - children and adults - equally*
- *To express our faith in active engagement within and beyond our own community*
- *To deploy our property and financial assets in strategic support of the ministry needs of the parish for the long term*
- *To become more open to change as we learn to grow*

